

## Questions and Answers:

### **Scheduling:**

#### **Q: What should I take my first year?**

Your schedule will vary by major and by the availability of courses. Consult with your academic advisor to determine the best choice of courses for you. Typically, students will have a schedule with a form similar to that below in their first semester. Most students in their first year take the types of classes in the green section each semester. Stronger students add classes from the yellow section.

Units	Course Type
4	Common Context
4	Courses toward a potential major (typically also Common Inquiries)
4	Common Inquiries/Language
1	PE Activity (often Fitness for Life)
4	Writing/Speech Intensive Course (often ENG-002 Composition)
4	Additional Potential Major, Common Context, or Common Inquiries Course
1	Choir or Musical Ensemble

Be sure to consult with your advisor when choosing the particular courses to take. Your second semester will have much the same structure, but typically include 16 units. Schedules will diverge substantially in later years depending on your major.

#### **Q: What courses are approved for General Education credit?**

The list of approved courses is available on the Registrar's webpage, GE Courses. The courses that have been approved are listed in alphabetical order by course designation under each GE area heading.

#### **Q: In what order should I fulfill the General Education requirements?**

While some majors will require modifications, the strategies outlined below should work well for most students.

**Common Contexts:** You should complete these in your first two years. Try to take at least one course per term.

**Common Inquires:** Plan to complete these courses by the end of your third year. Try to

take at least one inquiries course per term.

**Common Skills:** Take at least one writing/speech-intensive course and one physical activity course per year. If you will be continuing your foreign language from high school then it is a good idea to take a Modern Foreign Language course early before you forget what you have already learned. You will want to fulfill the Quantitative and Analytical Reasoning requirement in the context of your major or while fulfilling a Common Inquiries requirement.

**Compassionate Action:** This requirement is typically fulfilled in your final year.

### **Q: How do Off-Campus programs interact with the General Education Program?**

At Westmont, we strongly encourage our students to participate in an off-campus program. There are various types of off-campus programs. Some, like England Semester, are oriented toward a particular major. In this case they will have little interaction with the General Education program. Others, notably Westmont in Mexico, Europe Semester, and Westmont in San Francisco, are designed to offer various General Education opportunities. In general, a GE-oriented off-campus program will offer courses fulfilling Common Inquiries areas E through H. Consequently, when you are planning to go on an off-campus program, it is best to take courses from the Common Contexts areas and Common Inquiries areas A through D first and reserve the requirements below the line until you know what you will be taking off campus.

#### **Common Contexts** (taken at Westmont)

##### A. Biblical and Theological Canons

1. Life and Literature of the Old Testament
2. Life and Literature of the New Testament
3. Introduction to Christian Doctrine

##### B. Introduction to the Christian Liberal Arts

1. Philosophical Reflections on Truth and Value
2. World History in Christian Perspective

#### **Common Inquiries**

##### A. Reading Imaginative Literature

##### B. Exploring the Physical Sciences

##### C. Exploring the Life Sciences

##### D. Reasoning Abstractly

##### E. Working Artistically

##### F. Thinking Globally

##### G. Thinking Historically

##### H. Understanding Society

**Note:** Westmont in Mexico also offers opportunities to satisfy

- Modern/Foreign Language
- Physical Education Activity
- Communicating Cross-Culturally

### **Multiple Counting:**

**Q: Can I use a course in my major to fulfill a General Education Requirement?**

Yes! In fact, the first course in many majors will satisfy one of the Common Inquiries requirements at the same time as it fulfills a requirement in your major. There is no restriction on the overlap of major and GE courses.

**Q: Can one course fulfill multiple General Education requirements?**

Yes! In fact, it is expected that you will satisfy at least part of the writing/speech-intensive requirement while taking a course that fulfills a Common Context or Common Inquiries course. You will take another writing/speech-intensive course in the context of your major. In addition, you should be able to fulfill the Quantitative and Analytical Reasoning requirement while taking a course in the area of Exploring the Physical Sciences or Reasoning Abstractly.

**Q: What is the difference between Reasoning Abstractly and Quantitative and Analytical Reasoning?**

Quantitative and Analytical Reasoning involves the analysis of data or the application of mathematical (generally algebraic) models. Reasoning Abstractly will train you in the use of general deductive reasoning and the study of abstract (as opposed to specific, concrete) objects. Many mathematical subjects, like calculus, involve both areas of study. Other areas of mathematics, like geometry, involve abstract but not quantitative or analytical reasoning. Similarly, many physical sciences make heavy use of data analysis or of analytic models without studying the abstract properties of the models or methods of analysis.

**Q: I've already taken a course that fulfills a GE area. Is it OK to take another course that fulfills the same requirement?**

No problem! The course will be treated as an elective. Some majors actually require you to take multiple courses that fulfill the same GE area. Just make sure that in the process of taking extra elective courses, you do not neglect to fulfill the graduation and major requirements.

**Q: What are the rules for taking physical activity (PEA) courses?**

Only one PE Activity course may be taken per semester. Four PEA courses (including Fitness for Life) are required. You should take at least one PEA course per year until you have fulfilled the requirement. Otherwise, you may place yourself in a very awkward position as graduation nears.

Varsity athletes may use the PEA class related to their sport one time to fulfill a PEA requirement.

## **Transfer Issues:**

**Q: I want to take a GE course near my home over the summer. Is that OK?**

- Yes, subject to a few restrictions.
- The course must be taken when Westmont is not in session.
- The course must carry at least 3 semester or 4 quarter units of credit. (Note that each quarter unit will transfer to Westmont as 2/3 of a semester unit.)

- The course must be approved for credit at Westmont. The Student Records Office has a list of pre-approved courses found under the Transfer Credit heading. If the college or course you are considering is not on the list, determine the course's suitability by submitting the pre-approval form and a copy of the course description to the Student Records Office before you enroll in the course.
- You must take the course for a letter grade and receive at least a C- for your work.
- You may transfer at most 64 units from Junior Colleges.

**Q: What are the restrictions on the use of transfer courses from other schools?**

- Common Context courses must be taken at Westmont or a similar, approved institution such as a Christian College Consortium school.
- You must take the course for a letter grade and receive at least a C- for your work.
- You may transfer at most 64 units from Junior Colleges.

**What about AP/IB courses?**

- Westmont will give unit credit for any AP course for which you received a 4 or 5 on the exam. Credit is also given for IB Higher Level (HL) scores of 5, 6, or 7. You will also be given credit for any appropriate GE areas subject to the following restrictions.
- The records office must receive official notification of your score directly from the testing agency.
- Common Contexts requirements cannot be fulfilled using AP/IB credit.
- If you wish to receive credit for more than three Common Inquiries requirements, you must take an advanced course in the area and notify the registrar's office by completing the appropriate form.
- A maximum of 32 credits of AP/IB credit will be accepted.
- A complete list of the requirements fulfilled by AP/IB exams can be found on the Registrar's page under Transfer Credit.

**Q: I have a qualifying SAT writing or ACT English score. Am I exempt from the Writing for the Liberal Arts requirement?**

No, a qualifying score on one of these exams does not exempt you from the requirement. However, it does open additional options for satisfying your three writing/speech-intensive requirements. You may satisfy the Writing for the Liberal Arts requirement by taking any writing-intensive course. You are not required to take ENG 002 Composition.

**Language Issues:**

**Q: I took Spanish in high school. Can I fulfill my Westmont College Language requirement by taking French?**

- It is not a problem if you want to study a language you have not studied previously. You do not need to take the placement exam. You should enroll in the beginning level course.

**Q: What level of language should I take?**

If you will be continuing the study of a language with which you have previous experience, you should take the placement test to help you decide the level for which you should register. Your level will be determined by a combination of the exam results and the number of years you studied the language in high school. Students who have prior experience in a language will not be allowed to enroll in the -001 level of that same language.

**Q: What languages can be used to fulfill the language requirement?**

Any modern or ancient language can be used. At Westmont we offer Spanish, French, and German as well as Greek and Hebrew. In addition, you are free to study other languages such as Arabic, Japanese, or Latin at another institution during the summer. American Sign Language is not accepted for GE credit, but the units will be accepted for elective credit.

**Q: In what ways, other than signing up for a language class at Westmont, can the language requirement be fulfilled?**

- In addition to taking a course (at your appropriate level) at Westmont, the language requirement may be satisfied in the following ways.
- In a proctored setting at Westmont College, place into the fourth semester (or higher) of a language you have studied previously
- Take a language course (at your appropriate level) at another college, university, or junior college,
- Pass an AP language course with a score of 4 or 5,
- Pass an IB language course with a score of 5, 6, or 7,
- Score 580 or higher on an SAT subject area language exam,
- Be certified as fluent in a language not offered at Westmont by an appropriately qualified institution or individual.

**Interactions with other programs:**

Special considerations for Liberal Studies students.

Due to the intense requirements of the Liberal Studies major, it is critical to coordinate your choice of general education courses with the courses that you take for the major. This is particularly true for those who intend to complete a teaching credential within the four-year program. You need to arrange for an advisor in the Education department and, before you enroll in any courses, you should discuss your plans with your advisor.